

# 2021 Community Grants Guidelines

## Community Foundation of South Puget Sound

Community Grants supply broad, diverse, and responsive funds to support strong vibrant communities across Thurston, Mason, and Lewis Counties. The program is made possible by generous donors who have contributed unrestricted and broadly defined area-of-interest gifts, allowing us to build community capacity and respond to the community's changing opportunities and challenges overtime.

Our goal for the program is to make grants to nonprofit organizations that contribute to the social, health, and environmental well-being of our communities in many ways, including arts and culture, environment, health and wellness, education, economic opportunity, basic needs and humanservices, and community and civic engagement. [VIEW 2020 COMMUNITY GRANTS RECIPIENTS](#)

### Program Details

- We award roughly 80 grants annually through our Community Grants program
- Requested amount may be up to \$5,000; awards typically range from \$1,500 to \$5,000
- Total awards through this program in 2021 will be approximately \$325,000
- There is one Community Grants cycle in 2021 with an open application period from July 12 through August 27, 2021
- Grant checks for successful applications will be processed by late December 2021

### Program Objectives

In reviewing grant proposals, the Community Foundation considers the following:

- **Impact:** We support organizations contributing to individual and community well-being across a variety of focus areas including arts and culture, community and civic engagement, environment and animals, health and wellness, basic needs, and economic opportunity.
- **Geography:** We fund organizations that primarily work in our service area or fill unmet needs within our service area (Thurston, Lewis, and Mason Counties, WA).
- **Community Partnerships:** We prioritize organizations that carry out their work in coordination with local community partners.
- **Population Served:** We support nonprofits serving all populations and seek to prioritize populations and communities with unequal access to resources and opportunities.
- **Accountability:** We seek to fund services that are designed appropriately for the communities they serve and prioritize organizations that meaningfully engage the voices, perspectives, and expertise of their program participants.
- **Organizational Capacity:** We are seeking organizations that demonstrate reasonable financial health and basic capacity (governance practices, nondiscrimination, etc.).

Grants Committees made up of community volunteers review and score applications and make recommendations to the Board of Directors.

## Most Grants Will Be Unrestricted

“Unrestricted grants” invest in a grantee’s mission, rather than specific projects or programs. Grantees may use funds as they see fit to reach their goals. This may include salaries, overhead, technology, marketing, and more. To qualify for unrestricted grants, an organization must be based in Thurston, Mason, or Lewis County and meet all other eligibility requirements posted here.

[Click here to read more about the changes](#) we made to our Community Grants process in 2020.

## Eligibility

The Community Foundation of South Puget Sound makes grants to 501(c)(3) public charities that serve Thurston, Mason, and Lewis County residents. Organizations must acknowledge that 100% of Community Grant funds will be used in our geography. If your organization or group is not a 501(c)(3), you must secure a fiscal sponsor.

### Not eligible:

- Organizations that discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disabilities, age, status as a veteran, national origin, or any other protected classes
- Individuals
- Partisan political activities
- Religious organizations when funds would be used in whole or in part to further the organization’s religious purposes
- National and statewide organizations that cannot demonstrate a local presence in Lewis, Mason, or Thurston Counties
- Re-granting organizations, service clubs and service club foundations
- Schools, school districts, PTOs, preschools, childcare centers, camps, and sports teams

**Exceptions:** Organizations with a regional or statewide geography whose applications demonstrate how grant funds will be used for programs and services within our geography. Faith-based organizations whose applications demonstrate programs that meet a critical need in the community and do not require religious participation. Organizations that offer childcare, including camps, whose applications demonstrate robust or inclusive programming or service to underserved populations.

## Nondiscrimination Policy

The Community Foundation of South Puget Sound does not support organizations that discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disabilities, age, status as a veteran, national origin, or any other protected classes.

## Applications Due: August 27

Applications are due on Friday, August 27th at 11:59pm. Applications received after the due date will not be accepted. *Please note that staff will be available to answer questions and offer technical assistance until 5:00pm on Friday, August 27th. We recommend beginning your application before the due date—especially if you are new to our online grants system.*

## Apply Now

To apply, you will need to create an account in our online grants platform if you don't already have one. Once you start the application you can save your work throughout the process and come back to it later. We recommend reading through the grant and eligibility guidelines before you begin.

## Contact Us!

We welcome and encourage questions about the Community Grants process and strive to respond within 48 hours (about 2 days). For questions about eligibility, program objectives, evaluations, or your proposal, please contact Daisha Versaw at [daisha@thecommunityfoundation.com](mailto:daisha@thecommunityfoundation.com). For questions about the online grants platform or technical support, please contact Melissa Rosscup at (360) 705-3340 or [mrosscup@thecommunityfoundation.com](mailto:mrosscup@thecommunityfoundation.com).

## 2021 Community Grants Timeline

August 27	Applications due
September-October	Committee Review
November-December	Award notifications
By December 31	Grant checks mailed

## Online Grants Platform

The Community Foundation of South Puget Sound uses an online grants platform to compile information and support materials for our grant programs. If you are new to our system, you will need to create an account. At the time of registration, you will be asked to enter the following information:

- A username that is an email address
- Your contact information
- Your organization's information, including the EIN/Tax ID number (required)
- Contact information for the organization's Executive Director or CEO

Some suggestions for using the online grants platform:

- To work on your application in a language other than English, please use the "Select Language" drop down button in the top left corner to activate Google Translate (it takes a few minutes to reload page)
- Character limits include spaces and punctuation
- Be sure to save your work often by clicking the "Save" button at the bottom of the page
- The size of text boxes may be adjusted by dragging the lower right corner
- Required fields are shown with an asterisk\*
- To create a PDF version of your application that you can save and/or print, click the "Application Packet" button at the top of the page
- If you have any questions, accessibility issues, or need help with language translation, please contact Melissa Rosscup ([mrosscup@thecommunityfoundation.com](mailto:mrosscup@thecommunityfoundation.com) or 360-705-3340) for help.

## Additional Information

APPLY NOW: [Click here to access the online grants platform.](#)

APPLICATION QUESTIONS: [Click here to view 2021 Community Grants application questions.](#)